

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MOSCOW 02567 200047Z

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SUBJ: SOVIET COMMENTARY ON NEW PACIFIC DOCTRINE

1. SUMMARY. A COMMENTARY IN THE SOVIET ARMY NEWSPAPER KRSNAYA ZVEZDA DENOUNCES THE U.S. NEW PACIFIC DOCTRINE IN STANDARD TERMS, LINKING IT TO HISTORICAL AMERICAN PRETENTIONS ABOUT DOMINATING THE PACIFIC. IT ADDS A STINGER ABOUT THE JAPANESE, ROUTINELY CRITICIZES CHINA, AND CAN BE SEEN AS PART OF A LINE JUSTIFYING AND INCREASED SOVIET NAVAL PRESENCE IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 02 MOSCOW 02567 200047Z

THE PACIFIC AND INDIAN OCEANS. END SUMMARY.

2. KRASNAYA ZVEZDA (FEBRUARY 18) CARRIES AN ARTICLE CALLED "DRAGON AND DOCTRINE". THE ARTICLE BY REGULAR COMMENTATOR COL. A. LEONT'YEV BEGINS BY NOTING THAT THIS IS THE YEAR OF THE DRAGON IN ASIA AND THAT DRAGONS HAVE BOTH GOOD AND BAD QUALITIES. IT THEN RECAPITULATES PREVIOUS SOVIET COMMENTS THAT THE NEW PACIFIC DOCTRINE IS A U.S. EFFORT TO JUSTIFY A CONTINUED LARGE MILITARY PRESENCE IN THE PACIFIC AFTER ITS DEFEAT IN INDOCHINA. THE ARTICLE CHARGES THAT THE U.S. FAILED TO LEARN THE LESSON OF VIETNAM AND THAT THE NEW DOCTRINE IS A MODERN VERSION OF STATEMENTS BY THEODORE ROOSEVELT, GENERAL MACARTHUR AND SECRETARY RUSK ON U.S. DOMINATION OF THE PACIFIC. BUT U.S. FORCES ARE "NOT SUFFICIENT", SAYS LEONT'YEV, SO THE U.S. SEEKS SUPPORT FROM ITS JAPANESE ALLY. CITING A NEWS-WEEK ARTICLE IN THE 50'S, LEONT'YEV SAYS THE MAIN REASON FOR THIS IS THAT "JAPANESE CAN FIGHT AND DIE WITHOUT COMPLAINT."

3. CONTINUING, THE ARTICLE SAYS THAT "THE PENTAGON" NOW SEEKS TO EXTEND THE U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE TO THE INDIAN OCEAN WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF A "STRONG AMERICAN BASE" AT DIEGO GARCIA AND PERMISSION TO USE COCKBURN SOUND IN AUSTRALIA. "THE PENTAGON" ALSO HOPES TO ENCOURAGE ASEAN TO BECOME A "NEW MILITARY BLOC" TO REPLACE SEATO, SAYS LEONT'YEV, AND CONSIDERS INDONESIA AN "ANTICOMMUNIST BASTION" AND AN IMPORTANT STRATEGIC POINT ON THE NEW "FRONT LINE" OF ISLAND STATES IN THE PACIFIC.

3. LEONT'YEV MAKES THE USUAL CHARGE OF COMPLICITY BY PEKING IN WASHINGTON'S DESIGN, SAYING THE PRESIDENT WAS TOLD BY THE CHINESE TO "MAINTAIN AND EVEN STRENGTHEN THE AMERICAN MILITARY PRESSURE IN ASIA." BUT DESPITE ALL OF THIS, THE NEW DOCTRINE CONTAINS NOTHING NEW, LEONT'YEV SAYS, EXCEPT "INTRIGUE" AND THE "RISKS" INVOLVED IN PEKING'S OWN HEGEMONISTIC EFFORTS. THE PEOPLE OF ASIA WANT TO LIVE NOT UNDER THREATS AND FORCE BUT UNDER PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP, HE CONCLUDES.

4. COMMENT. THE ARTICLE SHOWS CONTINUING SOVIET CONCERNS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 MOSCOW 02567 200047Z

ABOUT THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE NEW PACIFIC DOCTRINE AS A DEFINITION OF AMERICAN STRATEGIC THINKING IN ASIA IN THE POST-VIETNAM PERIOD, THE REFERENCE TO THE JAPANESE SEEMS BOTH INFLAMMATORY AND GRATUITOUS, AND THE REFERENCE TO INDONESIA UNUSUALLY EXPLICIT. APART FROM THIS, THE ARTICLE IS OBVIOUS JUSTIFICATION FOR CONTINUING LARGE SOVIET MILITARY PRESENCE, PARTICULARLY NAVAL PRESENCE, IN THE PACIFIC AND INDIAN OCEANS.

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